


#162 Reflections on Farewells: My Journey Through Sent-offs.

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A Journey from Primary School to New Beginnings:

In our lives, farewells are inevitable, marking transitions and new beginnings. Here, I'd like to recount some of the farewells I've experienced. My first farewell occurred during my primary school years. Up until fifth grade, I attended school only for half days, apprehensive about the new school environment awaiting me. It was my initial venture beyond my comfort zone, a daunting experience for a young girl like me who didn't fully grasp the concept of separation. However, it wasn't until later that I truly understood the impact of farewells when I struggled to adjust to my new school for nearly three years. I missed lunchtime visits with friends, attended only half-day classes, neglected homework, and, most notably, longed for the presence of Vithya, my childhood companion.

Challenges and Growth in Secondary Education:

My second farewell unfolded during my time in secondary school, where I grappled with finding my place for three years. It wasn't until the final days of my 10th grade that I truly felt connected, fully immersed with 28 fellow students. As the end drew near, I found myself reminiscing about the simplicity of sitting at the back of the classroom, being the first to arrive, and the comforting presence of the gasa gasa tree. Throughout my tenure

up to tenth grade, I didn't attend any special classes. However, as I mentally prepared for the next chapter of my education, I struggled to accept the necessity of attending special classes for the following two years.

Reflections on My Final Farewell from School:

As I reached the culmination of my school journey at higher secondary level, it wasn't just the people and environment I bid farewell to; it was the entire concept of school life itself. The transition from school to college brought about significant differences – from the uniformity of school attire to the newfound independence of college life. The familiarities of school, such as ID cards, laboratory sessions, exam anxieties, academic pressures, and the ever-watchful eyes of teachers, were all coming to an end. Amidst the anticipation of what lay ahead, there lingered a bittersweet nostalgia for my inner school child, and the realization dawned that we were all evolving into adults. This transformation stirred within me new fears about aging and physical changes, marking the beginning of a new chapter as I embarked on my college days.

The Bittersweet Farewell of College Life:

As I approached the end of my college journey, the impending farewell stirred a mix of emotions within me. While the timing, location, and people were no longer sources of concern, what truly tugged at my heartstrings were the tangible reminders of my college experience – the uniform, the ID card, the familiar pathways to my classes, the bustling atmosphere of the lab, and the camaraderie shared with classmates and professors. My college was my sanctuary, my comfort zone, where I felt completely fulfilled.

However, the final year of college presented unforeseen challenges. An accident resulting in the amputation of my right leg toes left me unable to participate in many planned events, classes, functions, and competitions. Despite my deep attachment to my college and its memories, I recognized that pursuing higher studies there would not be the same. The prospect of fewer students, sparse classes, and a diminished college vibe led me to opt for distance education, a decision I have never regretted. Although I miss my college days and the struggles and conflicts that came with them, I find solace in cherishing the memories that shaped me during that pivotal chapter of my life.

From Childhood to Adulthood with Thambi:

Amidst the farewells tied to academic milestones, I've also encountered poignant emotional goodbyes, one of which stands out vividly in my memory – bidding farewell to my brother Ronald on two separate occasions. The first occurred when he was just a four-month-old baby, entrusted to the care of our periamma while we were away. Though I was too young to fully comprehend the concept of separation then, as I grew older, I found myself yearning for his presence, missing his every smile and playful moment. Despite my desire to be close to him, the physical distance weighed heavily on me during those days of separation.

The second farewell struck a deeper chord when we parted ways as he entered college and moved into the hostel. By this time, Ronald had become not just my brother, but also a close confidant and companion. The prospect of being apart from him evoked a profound sense of loss and longing. Despite knowing that he would return and our bond would endure, the days of separation ahead filled me with a sense of apprehension. Our close relationship made saying goodbye to him as he embarked on this new chapter of his life especially difficult, leaving a lingering ache in my heart.

A Farewell That Touched My Soul: My Father's Retirement

The farewell that deeply resonated with me and inspired me to pen down my thoughts is the retirement of my father, an event that left a profound impact on my heart. Witnessing my father bid adieu to his professional life stirred a mixture of emotions within me. It wasn't merely about the end of his earning capacity; rather, it was about the role he held, his unwavering activity, and his constant presence outside the home. As he transitioned into this new phase of life, I couldn't help but wonder about his thoughts, his feelings, and how he would adjust to the changes that lay ahead.

Finding the right words to express the depth of my emotions proves challenging even now, as tears well up and emotions overwhelm me. My father, the pillar of strength who provided both physical and financial stability to our family, will now embark on a new journey. My greatest wish is for him to find happiness, relaxation, and longevity in this new chapter, surpassing even my own lifespan.

My conclusion is that everything in life comes to an end, whether it's education, employment, family, love, relationships, or even life itself. It's important to recognize and appreciate these farewells, as they can bring both pain and happiness. Everyone must confront these phases of life. Additionally, I'd love to hear about your emotional farewells in the comments section, if you're willing to share.

“Embrace Endings, Embrace Growth: Farewells Are Part of Life's Journey!”